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JAEGER PROVIDES VOTING INFORMATION FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS

North Dakota Secretary of State Al Jaeger has announced the creation of a voter information bulletin designed specifically for students enrolled in North Dakota's colleges.

According to Jaeger, the bulletin is intended to encourage college students, who are often first-time voters, to exercise their right to vote and to educate them about the voting process.

"As with any new activity, voting for the first time comes with questions and maybe even some anxiety," said Jaeger. "By educating younger, first time voters about the process, I am hopeful that it will be less overwhelming for them."

The bulletin summarizes the qualifications for voting in North Dakota and provides guidance to both resident and non-resident college students about where they may vote.

"Where to vote is often the first question college students have," said Jaeger. "Often they don't know whether to vote in their hometown or in their college town. The bulletin provides guidance and options for students to consider depending on where they reside. One valuable option is absentee voting, especially for college students who are North Dakota residents and living away from home."

According to Jaeger, students can complete and print an application from the Secretary of State's web site and mail or fax it to their county auditor and within days have a ballot delivered to them to their campus address.

Jaeger also encourages students attending college in North Dakota, who are residents of other states, to contact their state election officials for information about the voter qualifications and the procedures for voting absentee in their home state.

The voter challenge process is also explained in the Secretary of State's information bulletin and alerts student voters that they are subject to be challenged by election officials. Since North Dakota does not have voter registration, the challenge process is the only safeguard that election boards can rely upon to screen persons wishing to vote in North Dakota and still ensure voter eligibility.

Jaeger's efforts coincide with an effort by the National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS) to increase voter turnout and civic awareness among younger voters. The National Association of Secretaries of State recently commissioned a study concerning young people's attitudes toward voting and civic involvement. That study, known as the "New Millennium Young Voters' Project" distinguished the generation of almost 70.2 million Americans between the ages of 18 to 24 as the "New Millennium Generation." According to the report, the "New Millennium Generation" is the largest generation of young people in our nation's recent history,

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surpassing the Baby Boomer Generation, and is predicted to “redefine society in the 21st century.”

“Unfortunately, this same generation continues to show a declining interest in civic participation and voting,” said Jaeger. “As the nation’s chief election officials, Secretaries of State are taking action to reverse these trends.”

The college student voter information bulletin is attached as a pdf document and can be accessed on the Secretary of State’s web site at www.state.nd.us/sec.

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